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Closer to the body: Reflections on *skript* and extracts from collected writings

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Abstract

In this two part article we reflect upon the experience of writing-dancing with audiences and artists in the context of our installation work *skript* (commissioned by Dance4, Nottingham, 2013). Part one considers how *skript* engages embodied, felt sense, improvisational and collaborative modalities in relation to the act of writing. As such we consider the ways in which the particular interface of language and embodiment, which is the focus of *skript*, might allow a knowing of ‘something’ otherwise – be that something a sense of our own bodies, a dance work, a performance experience or perhaps just that moment in time. In part two we share extracts of some of the writings that were collaboratively generated as part of *skript*. We focus on the work of three performance/movement artists: Guy Dartnell, Miguel Pereira and Rosalind Crisp. These dance-writings are published as they were written in real time, in the moment of engagement. They are edited only for length and at times to correct typographical errors (but only if the errors seemed to disturb the flow of the ideas) rather than to simply ‘tidy’ the text or the grammar. The writings are relational, improvisational and at times fragmentary. For more writings see: www.writing-dancing.blogspot.com.

Keywords

embodied

writing

collaboration

language

experience

Guy Dartnell

Miguel Pereira

Rosalind Crisp

fig. 1. & 2. *Skript*, photographs by Tony Judge

Part 1: Reflections on *skript*

Introduction

Skript – a place of encounter

Space: One to one, simplicity, scale

Access: Public and intimate space, open invitation

Time: Flexible duration and slowing time

Collaboration: A mode through which to support and reveal the unexpected

Mode of writing: Narrative, playful, improvisational, reflexive

*Experience, the body and dance: Writing of/from the felt sense and the body,
drawing up and developing (alternative) dance discourse*

skript, a micro-installation, was first presented in March 2013 throughout the NottDance Festival, Nottingham, UK, installed at a number of venues, often in theatre foyers before and after another performance event and commissioned by the festival producers, Dance4 (a UK agency for the development and promotion of dance).¹ Dance4 share with us an ongoing interest in how artists and general audiences engage with dance discourse, what does it mean to talk, think about and exchange views, on this thing called dance?

The following questions were part of the process of creation: how do you engage with others in different modes of dance writing? What are the relationships between words and movement? What is dance writing when you think of it as akin to choreography? What is writing when it is choreographic?

In response to these questions *skript*, an interactive micro-installation or micro-environment, was created. As a micro-environment the structure of *skript* was deceptively simple. Essentially it is a space that provides a framework for an encounter between two people. Vida or Jane, as the hosts, ‘hold’ this space of encounter, offering an open invitation for guests to join us, to become our co-participants. The installation consists of a white 1.5m square table, two folding white chairs, two small keyboards and a micro-projector that hovers overhead, casting its light onto the centre of the table. This area of light is our ‘page’. In this micro-environment both people write. They write into the same projected ‘page’ from their individual keyboards such that the writing develops relationally (and at times simultaneously).

Within this context we wrote with over 60 individuals. Our co-participants were members of the general public (from children to more elderly members of a writing group), dancers, dance academics and dance artists. We also wrote extensively with each other in response to the many performance works presented throughout the NottDance festival. Examples of this writing can be found on our blog (Bacon and Midgell, 2013) and in the pages that follow.

Co-participants were invited to enter into the processes openly with the simple suggestion that they might like to ‘Come sit and take a moment to share experiences of dance and dancing’. Expanding and en fleshing this invitation, we as hosts worked on our own ‘Opening’ as described in the Creative Articulations Process (CAP) model (see page XX in this issue) in silence and in order to give space and time as a ‘being with’ ourselves and participant as we sit and wait for written language to emerge into the collaborative space in whatever way it might. Our attention to bodily awarenesses was the basis for writing and throughout all the performances we continued to acknowledge and work with this through the way we sat, the time we took and the words we wrote. In doing so we acknowledge that we are taking time, time to note, time to arrive, time with the visceral, sensual, emotional quality of our physical presence in this moment – to pay attention to it. This process is not straightforward, for, how do you invite somebody to sit down at a table with a total stranger and say simply ‘write with me’, ‘be present with me’, ‘be with me just as you are in this moment’.

Seeking to make this invitation in non-didactic or non-direct modes, as hosts we might invite the participant to ‘take a moment to notice the breath’ or attend to our own physical sensation and write ‘I am noticing a small inner dance of my fluttering heart’. Or, maybe, a co-participant might be invited to recall the feeling of a performance recently seen or their memory of dancing – ‘do you recall the feeling of spinning as it resides within you?’

Co-participants were offered an open invitation to join or leave the installation as they pleased, and many (most) would dwell and write with us for extended periods. Perhaps we imagine that *skript*, in offering a certain kind of being together, brings forth or allows for a certain kind of language – language that lends voice to the embodied and the experiential, to the ‘nowness’ of a moment that had little concern for grammar and spelling. In fact our invitation to everyone who participated was to play with and on language. For example, someone wrote ‘nos-algia’ and that became a word play as we begin to imagine ‘ah, I’m actually algae’ and we are off spiralling into a world and word play where we are algae. So the words might be allowed their own journey, which is very improvisational and playful.

‘....swaying and sticking, the body as this organic, simple form...

I seek out my algae, finding a swaying somewhere along the upper reaches of my back and fluidity under my ribs, in the open space under my ribs for the flow of water through

me

drift, pulled along in the draw of the fluid moving water... sensing that drift, letting myself imagine it, an image in me a source of moving being.. and he runs by, the air passing like the water passes.'

(1 June 2013, Performing Place Symposium, University of Chichester)

In these encounters there was something about the process of finding language that emerged as being as important as the moment when the language is found and the moment is articulated. The beauty of language as it emerged on the page developed and formed between two operating as one on the shared screen. As David Abram has it, 'only by affirming the animateness of perceived things do we allow our words to emerge directly from the depths of our ongoing reciprocity with the world' (Abram 2011). There is in *skript* an emphasis on the reciprocity, but here with another person and technology, rather than in Abram's example with the 'animate world'. But, for us, these encounters did engage more than technology; they did heighten our sense of how words emerge from the depths of our engagement with the world. This exchange between two people, via the mechanism of technology, perhaps, might enable us to come to know a 'thing', to know something more about this or that moment, this or that sensation, step or action. So importantly, we do not write to keep but to bring us closer to the body. For, as Cixous has written: 'I write to feel. I write to touch the body of the instant with the tips of the words' (1998: 146).

In *skript* these experiences were of an intimate encounter. As one participant commented when asked what the experience had afforded her:

at first, I didn't understand why people were so gripped by it but when I sat down within a few minutes I understood as I was so pulled into the experience. It seemed like it could have been a conversation about anything but the presence of the experience made it so intense. And it was in a very public space but the experience was very private and somehow seemed to negate the public sense. But now I have no idea what I wrote.

(4 April 2014, Dance4, Nottingham)

This intimate act of collaborative writing needs and enables a slowing of time; time to settle into the chair, time to rest the fingers on the keep board, time to wait for the words that want to be said, for the words to stutter, tumble and then perhaps flow, time to watch the typed words appear on-screen without concern for the usual business of words as makers of meaning.

Language and embodied sensation

How do you, how do I, all of us, any body, find our way from experience or inexperience into word, into language? This question resonates throughout *skript* (and also in CAP). It is different for all of us in perhaps as many ways as it is the same. But we cling fast to what we believe to be the importance of finding language that holds that experience as fully as is possible in any given moment. As educational psychologist Roger Frie notes, referring to Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist Binswanger, 'language elaborates our bodily sensation' (2003: 156). So, informed by what we might call phenomenological enquiry, the structures and possibilities arising from dyadic forms like *Focusing*,

Authentic Movement, Contact Improvisation and various forms of psychotherapy (as outlined in CAP), the writing processes seek to give rise to, and find words for, what Leder, drawing on Heidegger, refers to as the ‘ecstatic body’ (Leder, 1990). This concept, and our work in CAP and *skript*, is part of a territory from Husserl, Hegel, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty to Ricoeur and others that gives us conceptual tools for understanding the phenomenal, lived body. Perhaps it is resonant with a Deleuzian ‘becoming’ (Deleuze and Guattari 2004). Primarily it is a space for re-animating the body, to move beyond Cartesianism and the romanticizing of the body. It is a place where body is both absent and present. Grounding the writing process in this heightened awareness of the body as both absent and present it is perhaps not surprising then that many of the participants appeared to absent aspects of experience, in this example, that of his usual perception of external reality in an attempt to capture the experience of the present ‘felt’ experience in the writing.

...lightness, I feel it too, as if my eyes
and torso are in a heightened state and the space around me has moved further
away than I ‘know’ it really is...

(16 March, 2013, NottDance Festival, Waverly Theatre, Nottingham)

These encounters are descriptions of the immediate physical actions and sensation (and the actions of typing):

‘we move, fingers dancing on the keyboard, breath in and out, head leaning forwards to
see more clearly. these are all our dancing moves, we choreograph our selves here as
words on the page.’

(19 June 2013, NottDance Festival, Drill Hall, Lincoln)

‘increase of the tips of my fingers through touching fingers to face, the pause becomes
an action...

a gesture of possible new directions..... of drift...

sand in the keyboard...

sand falling through keyboard, falling out of my fingers. the words drifting across
through me/us...

(1 June 2013, Performing Place Symposium, University of Chichester)

‘settling into the chair, eyes searching the space on the table for
for something to talk to ..respond to...ah, responsive, the feeling of being responsive...an
openess? willingness?’

(18 May 2013, Collaborations II Symposium, The Grove Theatre, Middlesex University)

These common opening phrases echo the participant’s turn in attention towards their
bodies as together we note the sensations in our own physicalities. What we noticed was
that if the participant began to settle into the encounter, and allow a noticing and working
from and with the presence of the other, and with each other’s words – resting and
ruminating with each other – we could begin to play in the process of writing that was

emerging and unexpected kinds of experience and often unexpected words, phrases and ideas would tumble forth. In this way words as written from the body, enabled and at the same time gave voice to a heightened bodily awareness, opening the space for memory, play and imagination to take flight.

...a somersault of thoughts and quiet foods
my thought is my body
my body is a stomachstomachsdhtosahstoa
stomach. ticking in my arms
tocking in my pits.
pulse pulse pulse flahhsl suqit.wait wait ing no clock in my body a game of
silence
ssusepnce. suspense. im nervous in my fingers but happy in my chest. I am
thinking by my body.I think before I sense....

(16 March 2013, NottDance Festival, Bonnington Gallery, Nottingham)

Encounters with dance makers and each other

Using the environment and approach to embodied writing provided by *skript* within the context of the NottDance Festival, we invited several artists to join us in this collaborative process and also committed ourselves to writing together in response to some of the performance works experienced during the Festival. Extended examples of these writing encounters can be found below (xx in this issue). In writing with artists such as Guy Dartnell, Ros Crisp, Miguel Pereira and with each other, we echo the commitment

evident in the CAP (Bacon and Middelw 2014: x–x in this issue) to the prompting of ways of being, thinking and reflecting that enable us and the artists we work to ‘surface’ things about performance practice that perhaps otherwise go unspoken or remain hidden because, akin to CAP, *skript* is a space to practice working towards greater clarity, towards being conscious of our lived experience. In these processes we are engaged in a joint ‘mediation’ around a shared experience – ‘We build something together and it’s in the intersection between your knowledge and mine’ (Miguel Pereira, in this issue).

What Miguel refers to also reflects our experience of writing together (which we have done for many years). There is, for us, a lack of ‘me and ‘you’ and more a sense that the writing generated is more than one or the other might have created. This rising together to form words that are beyond the ownership of either person is perhaps more common with collaborative devising processes in theatre or in the ensemble of the Jazz band for instance. It forms new possibilities, and, as we wrote together after most of the performances during NottDance 2013 (see blog for examples), a particularized sense of the works that we dwell with emerges. In this example, our shared sensations become apparent.

...the pulling across the stage the driven driving ever ongoing drift...

the bodies skimming in front of me and then... a pause.

she stands, the world turns, I feel slightly sick.

is everyone experiencing this dizzy sliding of perceptions?

I feel it still now, here and now as I sit typing these words,

it is still with me, in my body, a dancer stands still amongst many who move

left to right, left to right.

my perception of events is ardently challenged. who is still, who is moving.

I sway, woozy, sliding, dropping in and out, here and there.

The significance of this shared space as a potentiality feels resonant. The two people might be from the different perspectives of audience and performer, or from shared perspectives as in our individual viewing experiences of a moment of performance. Guy Dartnell and Jane reflect on this shared experience and the shared memory of the experience:

But you and I were involved in the experience so we share that and are focusing

in on the same experience

from different perspectives and maybe that attempt to articulate a moment of

experience in the piece

might hit a sense or a point where we really understand or really know or connect

to what it felt like to be in that moment.

In the collaborative writing together and with artists we were circulating and fleshing out experience and inviting a 'felt sense' of remembering: Guy Dartnell notes:

...as we were writing I remembered the light in the space in the Drill Hall Lincoln

and that space became really really present for me

in the moment of writing.

I could really see it and feel it and I could really feel again
the atmosphere and the way the sun coming up and down
really affected the way that room was..

On reflection, it is clear that the writing with artists and together directly as a means to evoke the memory of a danced/performed experience differs from our engagement with audiences who were encouraged into a space and time where they might have an embodied sense of themselves in an intimate encounter with an 'other', the former being about memory and its 'felt quality' of the 'back there in the moment' and the latter potentially about the 'felt quality' of the here and now as a felt imagining. If, as Charles Fernyhough suggests, 'memories are not the same as imaginings' (2012: 154) then writing with the artist was an engagement, not solely or even with an interest in the memory, but with the 'felt sense' that is evoked when contemplating that memory and what newly arises in that moment – which may not directly correspond to the memory.

The felt sense of 'back there in the moment' is experienced as a felt sense of here and now and we allow ourselves to imaginatively engage in order to find the right words, 'good words' (CAP,x- x in this issue) to express what is present here and now rather than trying to rely on descriptions and analysis of there and then. As we have indicated, the process of *skript* (and the underlying processes in the CAP model) is not concerned with an analysis of an object or product. In *skript*, experience, as felt, sensed or imagined, and

as activated in the collaborative writing, may move beyond what is remembered, tracing forward, becoming generative of new possibilities, and tracing back.

In this example for instance Ros Crisp and Vida ruminate on the changes occurring within a current practice:

I hold the images (once they have arrived) and every moment is measured by them. I can almost cut the air of my imagination, it seems thicker around me, and more time to read it and respond. And in the (un)holding of these intense images do you feel different patterns, shapes, tones emerging... I am imaging dancing with you – you with these resonances inside and wondering what that does to the space between.. Perhaps my dancing has got thicker, yet at the same time the shedding is very strong. Shedding is a sensation of complete unholding, emptying, a kind of beautiful agony.

The format also seems to offer an opportunity that is more difficult in a spoken exchange or an interview format. As Ros Crisp and Vida write:

... it feels a bit like having done a dance for you. yes.
and I keep thinking about the difference between this and having a conversation... it feels different to me, but I haven't sorted it out as yet – but yes.
Closer to having you dance for/with me perhaps.
Yes its different to a conversation...

The reflection continues, suggesting that the difference is perhaps

...because it's silent.

I love this, I can give all my attention to feel what your words are doing to me.

This is like watching a dance...

And also the slowness of the appearance of the words (speed of typing) allows time to

feel, to notice...

listening in the silence of the words...

The significance of words

Miguel Pereria and Jane write together from the memory *Opus 49*:

the body is in contact with something, with it's own space against other spaces
and this produces the sound, like the wind exists when it goes against a space, a
wall, a window, our own bodies, sometimes it's cheap spaces, sometimes heavy
and hard spaces. And sometimes the space gives rise to a movement, a moving
floor, a floor moving, undulating, a darkness that does not feel like the wind. Who
or what is here? movement, sound, body, space, existing always since we're alive
and it can be a virtual space as the space where we are right now. here and now.

Whilst seemingly obscure perhaps to a reader – taken as a fragment and without the
performance reference – there is a strong sense of the bodily experience and the space of
performance. The writing elaborates details that might otherwise be overlooked or as too
fleeting to be of notice. These moments are drawn out, re-lived, re-imagined. This
attention to the detail from the lived experience offers, we suggest, alternative ways of
articulating experiences of movement and dance practice, wherein the process of the

writing is to the foreground and the processes of coming towards something are animated and made visible.

As a way to articulate dance, *skript* is then a practice of struggling with coming into language. How, when, why, what word, all of that, is a present and ever-present process and that, when you engage another in that process, the sort of looping and spiralling and unexpected places that you can find yourself when you do not already know before you speak – oh that is about this, oh yes and I saw your piece and it was about that – but if we put that to one side, put judgement to one side and begin somewhere else. So that is what the strategies developed in Choreographic Lab are for and it is what the formal space of *skript* is for. It is both objective and subjective in that it allows one person to be present and available to his or her own experience in the presence of another on a moment-to-moment basis. The words on the page offer the opportunity to name and track that moment-to-moment experience.

There is something important about recognizing that those words in themselves are operating to give a word language to an experience. But in and of themselves they are not yet scholarship, they are not yet knowledge, but there is something about the processes of acknowledging that the words give us processes through which we might come to a knowing and come to a knowledge that can be shared and communicated. Perhaps a picture of knowledge underway might be a way of thinking of it.

As Pelias (2005) notes there is something about the way of being in this kind of experiential mode of writing that might give us a place where something is uncovered. It might be a place of discovery, but actually is also a place of the political, a possible place of political action and resistance. Susan Melrose (2005) writes about the knowledge economy of writing and the academic and publishing power structures that surround it. These structures are she suggests very tenacious and invasive. Production and peer review processes control the kind of language, the kind of writing that is conventionally given space. So, if there is a place of resistance in this writing that emerges, it is through the fact that it lends voice to things that otherwise often go unspoken and remain unseen.

Providing space and time for audiences and artists to find their own voice. We have found that this type of language gives space, time and possibility beyond those economies, beyond the hegemony of language and publication systems. In these ways we might say the work provided general audiences, and dance specialists alike, alternative ways to reflect upon and write experiences of movement and moving. In undertaking this writing an embodied, felt language emerged in which, akin to a stream of consciousness, there arises an emphasis on the lived experience of performance (rather than what might be said to be 'about' performance), for the process invites us to a dreamlike re-living of it, an imagining with a felt sense, which, in turn, implicitly enables the creation of dance discourses, wherein that discourse finds its locus in the present moment and embodied experience.

Part 2: Extracts from collected writings in *skript* with Guy Dartnell, Miguel Pereira and Rosalind Crisp

Fig. 3. *Inside Out*, by Guy Dartnell at Lincoln Drill Hall, 2013; performers Guy Dartnell and Ansuman Biswas
photograph by David Severn

Fig. 4. *Opus 49* by Miguel Pereira, at NottDance Festival, Nottingham, 2013. Photographer Claudia Mateus.

Fig. 5. *≠espèces* by Ros Crisp, at NottDance Festival, Nottingham, 2013. Heidrun Löhr

What follows are more extended extracts from some of the collected writings emerging from encounters in *skript*. These extracts are focused on and are, in part, co-authored with artists Guy Dartnell, Miguel Pereira and Rosalind Crisp. They reveal creative thinking and embodied performance experience at work. Each extract from *skript* has a short preface to introduce the work of the artist and their practice and closes with some reflections on the writing process.

Guy Dartnell, Inward Out

Inward Out (2013–2014) is a participatory event that invites people to connect with themselves and each other through the dual process of meditation and observation – two different yet similar experiences. The work was devised by performance maker Guy Dartnell and produced by Dance4.

Guy's work spans the realms of theatre, music, dance, circus and film and he has particular interests in healing, meditation and process work – striving to integrate these influences into his performance work – as is evident in *Inward Out*. Blending together meditation and 'performance' – the offers a space for the audience-participants to meditate or observe. The piece is durational, lasting up to four hours, and takes place

within a matrix of mats and chairs, with blankets and cushions on them, and a walking space around the edge for when people need to 'stretch their legs'. There are a number of 'artists' present, who 'hold' the space, but they are unrecognizable from anybody else and are involved in exactly the same activity (see <http://guydartnell.macmate.me>).

skript 020514: *While remembering performing and participating in Inward Out, Guy Dartnell (UK)*

I am waiting. Trying not to wait. Trying to disappear. No not trying. Trying is not important. Nothing to try for. This is for me as much as for those who have come... are coming... I hope... If I can be, then maybe they can BE too. If I can't BE, then why am I here. I am relaxing now. I am reassured of how unimportant I am, even though I'm in charge. Opening my eyes, I see I am not alone. There are more people in the space. They have appeared magically from nowhere... from my shut eyes... ahhhh... ahhhh... the sun coming through the skylight, illuminating the library... god, it is golden... this is the most beautiful place in the world... this is the world.... shut my eyes.... breathing.... that's so cliched... 'feel your breath'... f**k my breath... feeling... dark, volume, depth, far, far, near, head, breath, f**k my breath, calm, tense, tense, long, blue, bluish, blurred, round...

as I sit here, now, reading these words, I am filled with the memory of the experience.

The sun streaming in, the vast space of the light room and the vast interior space within me which holds dark and light, all that is and nothing that is. This is being? Is this being? Is this all?

I see my friend now. My friend is here. That's nice. That's frightening. You are my friend. But I am confused. Should I take care of you. You don't need taking care of. You can take care of yourself. I am helpless. I want you to Enjoy it but I have no power. I have no power even over my own experience. Why should I worry about you? Somehow it means more to me that my friend should have a Good Time than anybody else. I must forget that you are my friend. You are not my friend. I must free you from that. I must free me from that. Good bye friend. Eyes shutting. Goodbye friend. Liquid. Patterns..

Jane and Guy, 2 May 2014

Guy Dartnell, Reflecting on skript

It is interesting to write about [*Inward Out*] because it felt close to the experience that I have when I am doing *Inward Out* – the thought process. Although *Inward Out* is supposed to be a space where you don't have to think but inevitably, for me and I don't know about anyone else, I do seem to end up thinking quite a lot because of the particular nature of the experience. Because it is about thought and about not thinking about feeling. So the writing together does seem to summon up the experience of what it was like in the performance in a way that might not have done if we had just talked about the performance.

As we were writing I remembered the light in the space in the Drill Hall Lincoln and that space became really really present for me in the moment of writing. I could really see it

and feel it and I could really feel again the atmosphere and the way the sun coming up and down really affected the way that room was.

What is difficult still is trying to use the words to illuminate the experience on a felt level. It is interesting to try and do it. How do you write or try and give the essence of what I was experiencing other than what I was thinking? Of course, there is something interesting in the struggle to try and do it and then there is also the point when I go - it feels like these words will never convey to you or the reader what it was like.

Guy, 2 May 2014

Miguel Pereira, Opus 49

Miguel Pereira, described as one of the *enfants terribles* of Portuguese dance, has worked with Jérôme Bel, Vera Mantero and Francisco Camacho. His work is often autobiographical and draws on the interests and lives of those he collaborates with. His work employs text, both in speaking and in its absence, and also plays with the expectations of dance – its virtuosity, the requirement of movement and the importance of the body.

For *Opus 49* (2013), co-produced by Dance4, Miguel was inspired by the story of an amateur artist and her relationships to dance and music. Part experiment, part testimonial, the theatre becomes a space where new connections open up with the artist and audience through memory, sound, architecture and interaction.

skript 120413: *After watching and performing Opus 49, Miguel Pereira (Portugal)*

... I recall a darkened theatre. I am surrounded by people. A figure appears with a microphone.

It's me, in the dark trying to perceive the void. the emptiness... yes

Ah yes, he walks, moves slowly, gingerly perhaps. what, where... sound... no sound...

yes sound, there's no silence!

even if I'm looking for nothing!

[...] my fingers are searching for the right moment, the subtle movement as the microphone is searching for something in to the void space, the theatre space where I should dance but where I feel empty. Should we dance? She dances, I watch her stand and she dances, knees bending, arms pumping above her head to the loud music. Was there loud music? Did she dance? I feel

maybe! in her head there's loud music even if she's stand, quiet, but there's something always moving, the heart pumping??? giving the impression of something alive at least.

The shapes and sound of no sound, the shape of no dancing but dancing. The darkness and void, yet the playfulness of that. The flap, flapping of your belt, the crashing of your body or the chairs, those lovely, cheap, Ikea chairs.

the body is in contact with something, with it's own space against other spaces and this produces the sound, like the wind exists when it goes against a space, a wall, a window, our own bodies, sometimes it's cheap spaces, sometimes heavy and hard spaces.

And sometimes the space gives rise to a movement, a moving floor, a floor moving, undulating, a darkness that does not feel like the wind. Who or what is here? movement, sound, body, space, existing always since we're alive and it can be a virtual space as the space where we are right now. here and now.

yes, imagination, it's the word, dancing, smoking, writing, leaving, existing by the imagination. Sometimes we just need that, perceiving the invisible existence! existing invisibly???? as I wanted to do in my solo. Say more?, disappearing...just the trace of my presence, just my heart pumping, could you listen my heart pumping? I hear footsteps, inhalation, exhalation, heavy breathing with more steps, silence, more silence... if I fall into that silence now as memory I hear your heart, feel your heart but then... then there was more outer material elements of you rather than inner essence or material. The dance of the heart...

confronting my inner world with the outside world, that's it, with heart dancing dancing dancing... till the moment that it will stop. And darkness falls, we fall into the void... into the nothing... or maybe that is when falling cannot fall... when the void is void, nothing is nothing... where falling, walking, smoking, breathing, waiting, listening... stop. turn the microphone off. stop capturing, given up, abandoned, going away... but still existing.

Jane and Miguel, 12 April 2013

skript 050313: *While watching an online version of the live performance of Opus 49 by Miguel Pereira (Portugal)*

[...] wiggling,

jiggling, as I sit here in stillness... I feel your jiggling belt your microphone captures the image of you in my mind ear... I jiggle too...

the floor keeps moving, I sit and sit and sit... he falls and falls and falls. the music begins to fade. I see the fade, hear the fade, see the emptiness, the openness of possibilities. I notice the space behind my eyes and just above my eyelids. as the sound fades I feel a weight in my chest, close my eyes and wait.

coldness, darkness. the shadows of the space, on his skin in the tinny reverberations of the space... the sound is everywhere, overpowering my other senses. pulling me – like a physical tug from a rope to different places. and yet my bones, my dark shadowy bones scream with the falling, the falling of the chair, I am a chair falling. catch me if you can. catch me as I fall. shattering into bits, I shatter, I shudder. the destruction, wasted, violence.

[...] Sitting with him and he with us. I hold the microphone... hold it out to you... to hear your bones, hearing makes me see better... my moving is my seeing... my feeling is my hearing... And as he searches the space, his body, our bodies, my body for their own songs the muscles in by belly tense... will the song emerge? what will it lead too...

Stepping forward I feel a tentative creeping, a sensing out, a peeking into the darkness, and then, bam... the sound of the space and the very walls hit me. the sounds take their own journey into me, into my sitting bones, into my seat. do you feel sound in your bones? The sound seems to make me see more clearly, sounding as seeing... searching out the sounds, searching for what... the dancing... the dancing molecules... I feel into the darkness, my own emptiness and expectation. what do I want from him? what is he

doing? can I find what he is looking for, what he wants me to see/hear? him punches the space... the boy boxer rasping the breathe of the air across the mic rushing as his gestures sway through him, me. the punch punch... punch pa pa pa... all boy... papa... can you see me?

throwing a chair, beating it, bashing it, bashing, beating... the microphone draws me in, my eyes become sonic, I find myself wondering is the microphone on?

pa pa pa... bash... crash... bam... bam... bam... but she is there too... it is her dance... a dance for her... her manchester... her music... her... me... she... yes, she is very there too... she story, her story the manchester of her memories, and is the sounds of the space ours, hers, theirs? who is the beat beat beat of the marching song?

Vida and Jane, 5 March 2013

Miguel Pereira, reflecting on skript

I'm trying to build something with my fingers against the keyboard, thinking in a language that's not my own language but trying to find the right movement for a strange space. Yes, and a stranger... can we build something together... your language and mine... both fingers... both keyboards... both and more... We build something together and it's in the intersection between your knowledge and mine about English and between your knowledge and mine of *Opus 49*. I watch. I watch and I do, simultaneously, as I think and I act at the same time, I'm an observer and I'm an actor as in *Opus 49*, searching for this 'in between'. In this very interesting collaboration moment, about memories and dancing... and existing!

Miguel, 12 April 2013

Rosalind Crisp, #espèces (and other improvised dances)

Australian choreographer and dancer, Rosalind Crisp, established the Omeo Dance Studio in Sydney, 1996, as a place of residence for her research and site for the development of a community of dance artists in Sydney and currently spends her time between Australia and France.

The improvisation work #espèces was presented as part of NottDance, March 2013. This performance is part of Rosalind's ongoing exploration of improvised performance, 'd a n s e', and focuses attention on the emergent process of the dancers' movement, asking them to notice the continually evolving material of their dancing and to coexist in this field. In this practice she seeks to engage the audience in an immediate and visceral exchange through their bodies and their senses (see <http://www.omeodance.com/>).

skript 170303: *After watching and performing a live improvisation, #especies, Rosalind Crisp (AUS)*

the space between you me us... moving reaching your arms out, searching (re)searching!
the corner frames you, eyes all cast over me, away from you to him. but I
dwell with you...

your head curved to the side, my neck rotating, twisting to see feel your movement as the arms extend the back curving. breath heavy behind me. ha... ho, pheewww. the feet pa pa ba, pa. him as sound for you. your music. laughter.

in front of me he drops, foot held in hand. an in take of my breathe. I notice in myself the capturing of the picture. hold it vida, the moment pauses in my minds eye. the foot held in hand, leg at 90 per cent. an image to be recalled. replayed. re re replayed. the comfort between them resonates in the room. he and she. the rock and roll comes back like an old friend, ally. yes the rock roll rolling hands.

[...] ratbag. the play the connection resonates in us we feel you're connected. the solos too much extraneous movement. but in your parting.. in your distance across the room I feel his sound in your dance and your dance in his sound...

[...] we don't know the limits of this work.

Ros and Vida, 17 March 2013

skript 140313: While watching an online version of the live performance, #especies, by Rosalind Crisp (AUS)

articulating, articulate bodies. four of them, no five. a black space. the lights go off and come on. come on and go off. articulating space. I feel a familiar rhythm of continuous movement, the torso caves in, ribs shift to one side, a leg lifts, toes splay outward and up. down to the floor, smoothly moving as if seamless, jointless. working in the fluid of the body, the fluid body goes to the floor without bone.

[...] arms and limbs not quite... quite their/there. reaching to drop, and as I write I feel the pauses and not quiteness of my own patterns.. my own hesitations pause. and move again. darkening the space the sound of a lift, how does a lift sound. a sounding lift. lifting sound. my heavy body weighted to my chair struggles to hear a sounding lift. [...] we find our way in space with our moving body... I see the space unfolding, retreating and re-appearing. I see you move in and with the spaces, arms, torsos, legs, heads... all jostling with the space, all equally drawing my attention. the jostling, wiggling between each other, between the detail of the fingers, legs over the head, toe coming in to contact...

[...] all we have is what is there. and all I have is what is here. I dance. my torso rises and falls. my hands move across the keyboard as if a hand were a full body, complex articulations appearing and disappearing. I dance.

Jane and Vida, 14 March 2013

skript 141013: *Writing with Ros Crisp after dancing (UK/AUS)*

[...] I started with what I know, breath, listening to my breath, adding some tone to my breath, and slowness, each beginning of a movement slowed right down so that I could catch the breeze, the slippery dive under one arm and yet there down on my heel was another calling. Gradually my attention got in step with my moving imaging sensing... then along came tone. I love tone, I'm addicted to tone, pick it up, drop it, squeeze it, sound came out, word, Queen Elizabeth; each audience member gave me a different

permission, by the sixth I was over the hill an far away, deep into complex mad changes and shifting bits, all mobilized, voila.

yes the detail, the 'choreography' is there underneath or guiding. Its what I trust. body part, direction, tone, speed, interruption, flow, fall, weight, breath. And then the animal , the tricks can or might fly up. I never expect them or start with them. Actually I don't know where they reside, but I know they might come out to play if I go so multi mutli! with the visceral, the matter (i.e. my body). the body at the centre, at the start and end.... yes, and saturation is a delicious condition. That's why I dance, I suppose.

Everything is possible, there is enormous permission once my senses sensations are full bodied. Saturation, it feels a full word, weighty...

... saturation might sound like a global thing, whereas for me it is constantly specific, I mean saturation is all over, all in me, all in the space and between the toes of the writing, but and yet a twitch a shoulder a long arm a line drops, a tiny space shifts, arghhh words are not it, details each moment is different to the next, even though here is saturation (which anyway is changing) there is a detail that sticks out.

And is it that detail within the deep saturation that you follow? what kind of detail might it be?

That's what I'm struggling to find the words for. A detail of a surface of my body or a space that open between two bones or a sensation that slips under my chin or a picture of all my extremities at once... millions of details, that I can prolong, respond to, transfer to elsewhere in my body, exaggerate, oppose, leave... all this choreographing going on from the sensation saturated monster. These sensations, anatomical details that reside,

call, stock out... developing through compositional details – they feel rich in me as I watch, as I dance with you.

[...] ... the richness of choreographic thinking/doing sings loudly to me... can you say/feel what moment what detail might lead to a thickening or a diving under??!

It would be something to do with appetite for change. Thickening because before it was thin and I have trained myself to have an appetite for change, for noticing what texture, tone, direction, body part, image, I haven't used for a while, for the last minute! Contrast, pleasure, surprise, surprise myself by the contradiction of thin and thick of my response to my own absurdity, elizabeth, what's she doing here?! So this 'drives' me to laugh about it in dancing. Choreography as a continual pleasure of with, against, blah blah hee hee.

Ros and Vida, 14 October 2013

Rosalind Crisp with Vida, Reflecting on skript

and I am wondering about words and writing too as a way to follow and come to know bodies... I think when I write, label, find words, change words, what I am doing, how I am sensing and understanding what I do, who I am changes too.

I am sitting looking at words here and thinking what this finding of words, this putting them onto a screen 'does'? does for you? Well it is a little bit like dancing; I feel like I've 'met' you again or rather communicated myself to you by telling you what I'm engaged in now. So it feels a bit like having done a dance for you. yes. and I keep thinking about the difference between this and having a conversation... it feels different

to me, but I haven't sorted it out as yet – but yes. closer to having you dance for/with me perhaps. Yes its different to a conversation, because it's silent. I love this, I can give all my attention to feel what your words are doing to me. This is like watching a dance. And also the slowness of the appearance of the words (speed of typing) allows time to follow, to notice. It's not filled up with the all the other sensations when being with someone, what they are wearing, where the sunlight is, how old they are... etc. I love this cleanness where you come into my living room. listening in the silence of the words.

there is something intimate too. in this process of writing, of being with you (but not).

Yes private, and very personal. [...] ... it is like the potential that taking time in a studio offers too perhaps... Yes, the time it needs...

Might you be able to reflect on how the process 'works' for you??? I think it's all about 'holding' the sensations; So when I'm writing in response to you, it triggers a sensation, and I try to let the words run. The easiest of this 'flow' is when I talk about my dancing, because I feel I am doing it when I talk and the 'word' come from the doing. I suppose it's the same organization in my brain body system as when I am doing the dance; hence why I spoke about today's sensation-images, because they are still accessible to my body memory. I like reaching for the words. This process is very exciting, I need to concentrate, like when dancing to hit the right note...

by Ros and Vida, 2 April 2014

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Note

¹ Dance4 is an internationally recognized, experimental dance organization with a

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